A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

QUEEN,

AND THE

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24

Two Houſes of Parliament,

AT

St. *PAUL's*

On the 31ſt of *December*, 1706.

THE

Day of Thankſgiving

FOR THE

Wonderful Succeſſes of this Year.

By the Right Reverend Father in God,
GILBERT, Lord Biſhop of *Sarum.*

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

PSALM lxxii. Verſe 4.

He ſhall judge the Poor of the People, he ſhall defend the Children of the Needy, and ſhall break in pieces the Oppreſſor,

THIS Pſalm begins with a Prayer for *Solomon*, and contains many Prophecies relating to his glorious peaceable Reign: Moſt of theſe belong plainly to him, and were literally accompliſhed in him: But in them the Spirit of Prophecy pointed farther to the *Meſſias*. The *Jewiſh* Maſters themſelves think that *Solomon* is here ſet forth as a Type of the *Meſſias*, and that theſe Prophecies were to have a fuller Accompliſhment in a more Auguſt manner in Him.

The words that follow my Text can be no otherwiſe underſtood, *They ſhall fear thee as long as the Sun and Moon endureth, throughout all Generations:* So alſo theſe; *His Name ſhall endure for ever, his Name ſhall be continued as long as the Sun: Men ſhall be bleſſed in him, all Nations ſhall call him Bleſſed.* The Rapture with which the Pſalm concludes, is too high for any thing lower than this: *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, who only doth wondrous things: And bleſſed be his glorious Name for ever, and let the whole Earth be filled with his Glory, Amen and Amen.* So the Characters in which this King is ſet forth, do not only agree to the Moſaical, but alſo to the Evangelical Diſpenſation. The Predictions in my Text contain the Deſcription of a Chriſtian Prince; if he makes the *Meſſias* his Pattern, he will conform his Government to this Standard of Prophecy concerning him.

V. 17.

We have here all that is great and good, all that is valuable or deſirable in Government. Impartial Juſtice in the Adminiſtration at home; the generous Defence of ſuch as are deſtitute of the Means of preſerving themſelves, and a ſteady purſuing the *Oppreſſors* of Mankind, till they are *broken in pieces*; utterly diſabled to carry on their pernicious Deſigns. This is more copiouſly enlarged on in the following parts of the Pſalm. *He ſhall deliver the Needy when he crieth, the Poor alſo and him that hath no Helper. He ſhall ſpare the Poor and Needy, and ſhall*

V. 12, 13, 14.

ſhall ſave the Souls of the Needy. He ſhall redeem their Soul (or Life) *from Deceit and Violence, and precious ſhall their Blood be in his ſight.* Here is a noble Model, by which Princes ought to form themſelves, and their People ought to have the perfecter Joy in them, and the greater Confidence in their Conduct, the nearer they ſee them come to it. We have a Deſcription of the *Meſſias* in the Viſions of *Iſaiah*, not unlike this in my Text. *With Righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity for the Meek of the Earth. ——And with the Breath of his Lips ſhall he ſlay the Wicked.* xi. Iſaiah 4. The Word rendred in our Tranſlation *Oppreſſor* is by the *Seventy* and the Vulgar rendred the *Sycophant* or *falſe Accuſer*, by the *Syriack* the *Tyrant*, and by the *Arabick* the *Criminal*. Every one of theſe Rendrings may be of uſe, to give us the compleat Idea of an Enemy to Mankind. Here we have a beautiful View of a glorious Government, I had almoſt ſaid of our own. It is true, the *Oppreſſor* is not yet *broke in Pieces*, but if we are not wanting to our ſelves, and to that Conduct of Providence which we do now celebrate, we may hope, from the Advances already made, to ſee this finiſhed in due time.

What a Curſe has it been to Mankind, as well as it is an inverting the Ends of Government, that ſo few have copied after this great Original! Can it be ſuppoſed that any are ſet over others, but for the Good and Happineſs of their People, and the Safety of their Neighbours? and that a due Ballance may be kept among them, ſo that none of them may outgrow the reſt, or have them too much at *Mercy*? Can any think that Princes are raiſed up to that Exaltation of Glory and Dignity, only to gratify their reſtleſs Ambition, their boundleſs Deſires, and their ravenous Projects? The *Alexanders* and the *Cæſars* may be propoſed as Patterns to thoſe who are upon the falſe ſcent of Glory; but what a Plague has it been to the World, that thoſe who would paſs for God's Repreſentatives, have choſen rather to carry on them the Characters of *Abaddon* and *Apolluon*, to be the Devourers and Deſtroyers, rather than the Deliverers and Preſervers of Mankind?

Alexander upon no Provocation invaded a great Empire,

that was ſurfeited with Wealth, and enervated with Luxury. His Inſolence grew with his Succeſs, and became inſupportable even to his *Greeks*. He was for ſome Years the Scourge of the Age; but tho' he deſired to paſs for an Immortal Man, and the Son of *Jupiter*, he did not long outlive his return to *Babylon*, but was poyſoned by his Captains, who ſhared his Spoils among them without any regard to his Family.

Cæſar had a deeper management, and a greater Mind, but all was Craft and Perfidy. It is true, a Conſpiracy againſt his Country, its Laws and Liberties, ſucceeded in his Hands, and upon his Advantages he govern'd himſelf with much Dexterity and great Art; but his Deſigns appearing too ſoon and too evidently, a Conſpiracy againſt himſelf was conducted with the ſame Succeſs that his againſt his Country had been, and he fell a Victim to Treachery and Ambition. Thoſe falſe Heroes, who were as unhappy in the Concluſion, as they had been proſperous in the Progreſs of their Fortunes, have, as it were, bewitched the Men in Power and Authority, to follow their Examples, and to tread in their Steps.

How long and how much has the World ſuffered by theſe Maxims? What havock have they made of Nations? and what Scenes of Fire and Blood have been acted by Men, who might have been publick Bleſſings, the Darlings of Mankind, and the Glories of humane Race? How have they abuſed the Power truſted to them by God and Man for the good of the Community? They begin with their own People, they oppreſs and enſlave them that they may be the fitter Inſtruments of their Cruelty, the more zealous to oppreſs and enſlave others, hoping that by ſuch Services their own Miſeries may become the leſs uneaſy, and the more ſupportable to them. Princes who govern themſelves by ſuch Maxims do certainly render their own People miſerable, but they are not ſo ſure to ſucceed in their Deſigns on their Neighbours. They may at ſome time or other turn terribly upon them; for a Nation exhauſted by a long tract of War, and diſpirited by all the Contrivances of Oppreſſion, will prove an unequal Match to a free and injured Neighbour.

Should they ſucceed and conquer! What is Conqueſt but a

falſe Gloſs, put on the worſt and blackeſt of Crimes, Injuſtice, Robbery and Cruelty? It is ſcarce poſſible to imagine, how a Man can be guilty of a Sin more heinous in it ſelf, of a more complicated Nature, and attended with more diſmal Conſequences, than to be the Author of an unlawful War. All the Violence that is done, all the Blood that is ſhed, with all the Train of Wickedneſs that follows War, is certainly to be charged on the unjuſt Aggreſſor. How heavy muſt that Load lie!

But what a bleſſed Reverſe to all this does appear in a Government framed and conducted by the Rules here ſet forth. A Sovereign poſſeſſed with theſe Principles, has the Good of his People ever in his View. All his Councils and Deſigns are directed to promote this. He feels all their Happineſs as his own. He thinks he has a Property in it all. He wiſely foreſees and guards againſt Dangers at the greateſt Diſtance. He bears a ſenſible Share of all the Troubles and Loſſes of his People. Theſe raiſe in him tender Compaſſions, eſpecially if they follow upon any Error or ill Conduct of his own. This will give him a real Agony.

Panegyricks, Statues, or Triumphal Arches, are mean things to Men of exalted Minds; they deſpiſe thoſe expreſſions of Slavery and Flattery; they feel a Joy of a nobler ſort when they ſee their People happy, and when all acknowledge that it is procured to them by their Prince's means; of ſuch it will be ſaid without Flattery, for God has ſaid it, *Ye are Gods.*

Theſe *judge even the Poor of the People*, they hold that Ballance even and ſteady; they align for the deputed part of Judgment, *Men fearing God, hating Gifts, and eſchewing Covetouſneſs:* In Caſes that come under their own Eyes, and are reſerved to their Deciſion, they do Juſtice without *Reſpect of Perſons*, to the *Poor* as well as to the *Rich*. The meanneſs of the Perſon that prays it, recommends him to their Favour and Compaſſion, ſo far are they from deſpiſing or neglecting any becauſe they are poor. The juſt Prince admits all eaſily, he hears them patiently, he weighs every thing calmly, and determines with ſuch Integrity, that Juſtice flows from the Throne like a Stream, watering all with its Moiſture, and rendring all Induſtry, and every good Deſign fruitful.

It is the peculiar Happineſs of a well conſtituted Government that there are ſettled Boundaries, and eſtabliſhed Checks to reſtrain and over-awe thoſe on whom Corruption or Frailty might otherwiſe prevail too much. It is ſcarce poſſible for human Nature to keep within due Bounds, where the Power is without Controul. Some Princes may perhaps have Virtue ſo radicated in them, that how abſolute ſoever their Authority may be, they will employ it all for the Good of the Community: Yet this cannot laſt long, if it has no other Bottom but the Will and Pleaſure of the Prince.

From *Nerva*'s time down to *Marcus Aurelius*, the *Roman* Empire had for above fourſcore Years the beſt Succeſſion of Princes that we find in Hiſtory; yet all the Good that theſe did, was ſoon overturned by *Commodus*, in whom Arbitrary Power appeared in its natural Colours, Luxury and Cruelty.

Happy we! and yet more happy if we had a juſt ſenſe of it! who live under a Government, well ballanced, and ſteadily managed; where Juſtice and Mercy meet together, and temper one another; where the pooreſt are not afraid to complain, and the greateſt are not above the reach of Juſtice; where the courſe of Law is free, and the proper places for Redreſs are well known.

The Second Branch of the Character of a Prince conform to the *Meſſias*'s Standard is, *He ſhall defend the Children of the Needy*, the doubly miſerable, who are neceſſitous by entail: Neither they nor their Fathers are able to ſupport them. If a Prince is in an helpleſs ſtate, an Orphan feeble in himſelf, and forſaken of all; if his Dominions be expoſed, and ſeem a convenient Acquiſition; if the Conjuncture is favourable, and the Oppoſition is like to be inconſiderable, this will ſeem ſo inviting to thoſe Beaſts of Prey, the Conquerors, that they will imagine they have a Right to all that others have not a Force to maintain. Thoſe Men of Rapine, the Wolves and Lions of our Race, do with an unrelenting and inſatiable Fury, devour the Honeſt and Induſtrious, little practiſed in the Arts of War, and leſs acquainted with the Methods of Invaſions, who may think they are ſafe, becauſe they know they are innocent.

Theſe will be quickly ſwallowed up by them, if they

are not within the reach of a just and merciful Prince, who thinks it not enough for him to make his own Country safe and happy, but looks on himself as bound by the Ties of Nature and Humanity, of Compassion to the Miserable, and Regard to the common Interests of Mankind, to vindicate an injured Neighbour, a broken Alliance, and a perfidious Invasion; to defend the Fatherless, and to rescue the Oppressed; to *redeem their Lives from Deceit and Violence*, to shew his Horror at Blood unjustly shed.

It is true, War in general is contrary to the Spirit and the Design of the Christian Religion; yet the Magistrate would *bear the Sword in vain*, if he might not punish what is done Abroad, against Treaties, against the Laws of Nations, and the Rights of his Neighbours and Allies, as well as the Crimes committed at Home against his own Laws. The Good and Safety even of his own People, being more concerned in the one than in the other. The robbing a Kingdom is more criminal in it self, and of more mischievous Consequence than that on the High-way; which is Petty Larceny compared to the other. A single Murther is far short of a Commission given for Slaughter, and to execute whole Countries: A new Phrase, to which the Barbarity of former Ages did not rise up, but is well suited to modern Practices. War against such Hostility to Mankind, is in its Original and Nature still defensive. Rom. xiii. 4.

How glorious is the *Defence!* when it is undertaken with a pure regard to Justice, and to the preserving a due Ballance; without any pretence to Conquest, or even to Cautionary Towns, for refunding a vast Treasure, laid out in the Defence of helpless Neighbours, far above what they can repay, tho' they should mortgage themselves for their Ransom.

When *Abraham* went to rescue captiv'd Kings, to recover the Spoil, and deliver the Prisoners, and succeeded in the Attempt, he took care of his Allies who had ventured with him, and he abated for the Subsistence of his Men; but as to his own part, when the rescued Kings out of a just Gratitude, put every thing in his Power, he restored all to them, even to the smallest Gen. xiv. 14, to the end.

matter, with this heroical Expreſſion, they ſhould not ſay *They had made* Abraham *rich.*

It will be reckoned among the laſting Glories of this Nation, that we ſaw one great War ended without any Demand for Repayment, or the leaſt View of Intereſt, Ambition, or any other Advantage whatſoever, beſides the Safety procured to us at Home, and the Security given to thoſe Abroad.

This is the true Sublime of Generoſity, when thoſe who are reſcued from Tyranny and Oppreſſion, feel that they have not only changed Maſters; but that they have paſſed from Slavery to Liberty, and from Violence and Rapine to Eaſe and Quiet. How theſe Meaſures of Government are purſued in the preſent Adminiſtration needs not be opened or enlarged on; the thing it ſelf ſpeaks, all ſee and feel it.

The Third Branch of the Prophecy, in which the Nature of the *Meſſias*'s Kingdom is foretold, is, *He ſhall break in pieces the Oppreſſor*, the *Tyrant*, the *falſe Accuſer*, and the *Criminal.* Every one of theſe Rendrings carries in it ſomewhat that is ſo odious, that the Conjunction of them all in one, muſt give Ideas full of Horror. We need not run far in viewing the preſent State of the World, before we ſhall find ſuch certain Indications, as cannot miſlead us in fixing this Character.

A ſure one is, if a Prince has given full Scope to Pride and Inſolence, has encouraged all the Exceſſes of Flattery, has ſuffered himſelf to be called *the Immortal Man*, his *Divinity*, and *the King of Glory*, with many other blaſphemous Indecencies practiſed of late, beyond any thing that we find done ſince the Days of *Caligula* or *Heliogabalus.*

If this Prince has broke thro' all the Liberties of his People, debaſed all their Judicatories, invaded all their Properties, and ſubjected every thing to his own Will and Pleaſure.

If he has violated all that was moſt ſacred in Government, in the Face of irrevocable Edicts, ſecured by his Coronation Oath, confirmed by many ſolemn Promiſes, joined with Acknowledgments of great Services done by thoſe of his Subjects, againſt whom nothing but the Matters of their God was ever pretended: If he has let looſe all his Fury upon theſe, condemned them to Dungeons and to Gallies, to the Fire and to the Wheel, only becauſe they could not yield to

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a barbarous Force, and in ſpite of Conviction and Conſcience turn to the King's Religion; which was the Argument chiefly urged by the Miſſionaries of that Cruelty, the Dragoons. Of this I may ſpeak with the more Aſſurance, having been an Eye Witneſs of thoſe Scenes of Horror. If we know to whom all this belongs, we have one full view of an *Oppreſſor*. If we will look at him in another Light, we will find him out by an Age of Wars, which were all unjuſt and perfidious in their Original, as well as Inhumane and Cruel in their Progreſs.

A General Peace ſeem'd to put an end to War; upon that a Marriage was made, and an Oath was taken, renouncing all Claim of Succeſſion by it; yet that was broke thro' upon a feigned Pretence of the Preference due to the Females of the firſt Marriage. The Invaſion began at the ſame time, that the Deſigns of it were ſolemnly denied at the Court chiefly concerned. Here was the firſt War: Conqueſts were eaſily made, where a feeble Orphan could make no Reſiſtance.

The Alarm that this gave awakened all the World: We ſeemed to feel it, and in Conjunction with the States moſt concerned, put a ſtop to a farther Progreſs. All that was demanded by him being yielded, a new Peace was concluded. Soon after that, a Project was laid againſt the States, who had given no other Provocation, but becauſe they had taken Care to ſecure themſelves by preſerving a Barrier. No Colour could be found to juſtifie an Invaſion, againſt the Faith of many Treatres, and a long Alliance. The *Glory* of the Prince was all that was pretended.

Upon this the ſecond War broke out with ſuch a Torrent, that if the Conduct had anſwered the firſt Succeſſes, thoſe bleſſed Provinces muſt have become a Prey. God raiſed up indeed a mighty Deliverer, who reſcued them out of the Paw of the Lyon.

Upon a Change in the Face of Affairs a new Treaty was opened, but ſo managed, that it was viſible it was intended only to diſſolve a great Alliance, and to lay the Allies aſleep: fraudulent Practices were but too ſucceſsful. Peace was again made, but Hoſtilities went on ſtill. In full Peace two of the moſt important Places, that ſecured the Empire and the States were taken; and at the ſame time an infamous Courſe of Forgery and

Strasburg, Luxemburg.

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Violence was ſet on Foot on the Pretence of Dependencies and Re-unions. The Empire being uneaſy at theſe Infractions, was threatned with a new War, unleſs they would confirm thoſe unjuſt Acquiſitions. That great Body was not then in Condition to reſiſt ſuch an Invaſion, ſo they agreed to confirm all by a Truce, for a Term of Years, which is a full Peace during the Term. This procured them only a ſhort, as well as a falſe Interval of Quiet.

A third War was begun without the leaſt Colour of a Breach on their Side: Nothing was pretended beſides the unaccountable Apprehenſions of a War deſign'd by one of the weakeſt Princes of the Empire. Here we may view the Oppreſſor in a clearer Light, that was more viſible and ſenſible to us, by the great Share we bore in that long and devouring War.

When the Impatience of ſome, and perhaps the worſe Deſigns of others, made a farther Progreſs uneaſy: Then a fourth Peace was concluded. At the ſame time the Emiſſaries of the falſe Accuſer were every where at work: Jealouſies were infuſed: Diſtractions were raiſed: And theſe had fatal Effects in more Places than one: All diſarmed again, while the Oppreſſor, who ſaw what was approaching, kept up a mighty Force! In our weakned and disjointed State, our Great Deliverer thought that of two Evils the leaſt was to be choſen. So a Treaty was made, with a particular Proviſion, that no Will nor Teſtament in Oppoſition to it ſhould be accepted. This was no ſooner agreed to than Practices were ſet on Foot to procure ſuch a Will, true or forged, which was no ſooner publiſhed and offered than it was accepted, and that was coloured with an Excuſe that aggravates the Perfidy. *That the Spirit of the Treaty was conſidered preferably to the Letter or Words of it.* Framed no doubt by a Society well practiſed in ſuch Diſguiſes.

When all this Deduction of four great deſtructive Wars, begun with ſo much Injuſtice; and five deceitful Treaties all perfidiouſly broken; when I ſay, all this is laid together, we ſee very evidently, to whom the Character of an *Oppreſſor*, with all the other various rendrings of the *Word*, do manifeſtly agree: If all the particular Inſtances of every Breach of Articles, Capitulations and Cartels were to be brought

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in to the Account, it would ſwell yet to a far greater Bulk.

It remains next to be conſidered what is meant by the *breaking the Oppreſſor in pieces*: Leſs certainly cannot be meant, than the diſabling him to perſiſt and go on in his Oppreſſion; and not to give him that Reſpite and thoſe Intervals, that by long and dear Experience, we may know, he only deſires, that he may recover himſelf, and recruit his Forces, and then return to his former Practices as ſoon as a falſe Peace may put him in a condition to proſecute them, and to take ſevere Revenges for what's paſt.

There is no Peace, ſaith God, to the Wicked: Till what is perfidiouſly ſeiſed on is reſtored, till the Exiles are recalled, the Priſoners are ſet at Liberty, till the Edicts that were their Inheritance are revived, and Compenſation is made for the *precious Blood* that has been ſhed among them, till the *Oppreſſor* is ſo bounded, that his own People are ſecured from Oppreſſion, and his Neighbours from Invaſion; till this is done, it is reaſonable to hope that Man will ſay as God has ſaid, *There is no Peace to the Wicked.* Iſ. lvii. 21.

There is a memorable Paſſage in the Hiſtory of the Kings of *Iſrael* that deſerves our Attention. When *Benhadad* King of *Syria* had invaded *Ahab*, at the ſame rate of Juſtice and Decency that has been obſerved by the modern *Oppreſſor*, the firſt Declaration of War being in theſe Words, *Thy Silver and thy Gold is mine, I will ſend my Servants who ſhall ſearch and take away whatſoever is pleaſant in their Eyes*: That King, tho' the worſt of all that reigned over thoſe Tribes, being thus attack'd, had, as a Prophet promiſed him, in the Name of God, in two ſucceeding Years two entire Victories; or to ſpeak in our own Stile, a *Hochſtet* and a *Ramillies*; and a great part of the *Syrian* Army periſhed under the Walls of *Aphek*, a Town we may imagine not unlike *Turin*. The proud Invader was ſo broken with theſe Loſſes, that he beg'd not only Peace, but his Life, in a very abject manner, calling himſelf *his Servant Benhadad*. *Ahab*, by an ill-timed Generoſity, accepted his Submiſſions, and believed his Promiſes. He treated him as a *Brother*, and a Peace was ſoon concluded: All he could aſk was granted. Upon this a Prophet was ſent to him with 1 Kings xx. v. 3, 4, 5, 6. v. 13. v. 20, 21, 30. v. 32.

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this ſevere Meſſage, *Thus ſaith the Lord, becauſe*
V. 42. *thou haſt let go out of thy Hand a Man whom I appointed to utter Deſtruction, therefore thy Life ſhall go for his Life, and thy People for his People.* The Articles of Peace were not kept, nor were the Towns reſtored. And when *Ahab* went to poſſeſs himſelf of one of them, he was killed in Battel, and the *Syrians* had a full Revenge in the following
1 Kin. xxii. 3, 4. Reign, as was foretold by *Eliſha*, *They burnt the*
2 Kin. viii. 12. *ſtrong Holds of Iſrael, they ſlew their young Men,*
1 Kin. xx. 31. *they daſhed their Children, and ript up their Women with Child.* The Kings of *Iſrael* had the Reputation of being *merciful Kings*, and perhaps their People were uneaſie by reaſon of the War; but they ſoon felt, and that very ſenſibly, the Effects of an undue Compaſſion, of an unreaſonable Confidence, and of a haſty and ill-ſecured Peace.

Theſe things are written for our Example: It is to be hoped, that none will think the Work is done, till Juſtice is done to Mankind, and till the *Oppreſſor* is put out of a Capacity to return to be any longer the Plague of the World, as he has been for near half a Century, more than Famines, Earthquakes and Peſtilence.

We do now all ſee and feel the Effects of that Haſte, with which we run formerly into a precipitated Peace, and put an undue Confidence in a Faith that was ſo little to be depended on: We ſee what Advantages this gave, and the Miſtruſt that it created at Home, which has brought us under an uneaſie After-game; and we may juſtly apprehend more fatal Effects if we fall again into the like Error, the laſt would be worſe than the firſt.

It is true, *Peace* is a Word of an agreeable Sound, it ſtrikes and has Charms in it. God forbid, that any who carry the Name of a Chriſtian, ſhould reſolve againſt all Terms of Peace whatſoever. It would ill become a Miniſter of the *Prince of Peace* to ſound the Trumpet of War; but a falſe deluſory *Peace*, a *Peace* in which any Confidence is put in a Faith ſo often and ſo impudently broken, a *Peace* that may lay us open to new Wars, and may involve us in new Dangers; ſuch a *Peace* is certainly an Opiat that may give a preſent Quiet, but that will have a terrible awakening, if it does not make us ſleep *The Sleep of Death*.

There

There is a *Mercy* that is *cruel*, not only to the reſt of Mankind, but even to thoſe who are the Objects of it; and a juſt Severity may be a Bleſſing, not only to the reſt of the World, but even to thoſe on whom it falls heavieſt. It may bring them to ſuch Reflections on themſelves, as may render them capable of that Mercy which they do ſo much need; and it may put them out of a Capacity of encreaſing their Guilt, or of enhanſing their Puniſhment, which muſt come on them heavily ſomewhere, here or hereafter.

And why ſhould any deſire to ſtop the Progreſs of the Glory of a Triumphant Reign? that has every Year ſhined out, in a Courſe of wiſe Counſels, and great Deſigns happily executed: But beyond all Example in this MARVELOUS MARVELOUS YEAR, which has been a continued Chain of Prodigies. It did begin with a Face black enough to have intimidated Perſons leſs brave, than thoſe who encountered it.

In ſeveral places Matters ran very near the laſt Extremities, and were brought to the edge of the Precipice. That ſeemed to be ordered by a ſpecial direction; that the Interpoſitions of Providence might appear more ſignally when they were reſerved to the Critical Minute. On the ſide of the Oppreſſor they were ſo aſſured of Victory, that they departed from their uſual Methods, and ventured on the deciſion of one Great Day. That ended Glorioufly in a Compleat Victory, and added new Lawrels to our fam'd General, and new and moſt important Acquiſitions by his Conduct to our Allies, and a new Scene of Glory to our Renowned Queen.

Victory alone is a thing bright and full of Luſtre; but what words can fully ſet forth the recovering great Provinces, and the taking ſtrong Places, almoſt in as few Days as they coſt Years formerly? Towns well fortified and well furniſhed, held us not ſo many Days as our Enemies loſt Weeks in the Siege that ended ſo fatally to them; and all this with ſuch inconſiderable Loſs on our ſide, that it ſcarce deſerves to be brought into the Account.

It is true, we ran one great Risk, which might have changed an entire Victory into a total Defeat, ſo much is one Man of more value than many thouſands. The happy reſcue that came ſo ſeaſonably, gives us reaſon to conclude, that a Life of ſuch importance to us all, is under the watchful guard of Providence.

The Bleſſed Reverſe of thoſe promiſing Appearances and Hopes with which our Enemies flattered themſelves in the beginning of the Year, the great Progreſs made in it, and the glorious Concluſion of it, may be well looked on as Pledges that Heaven is on our ſide, that God goes forth with our Armies and fights our Battels; that he defends the Cities of our Allies, and defeats the Deſigns of our Enemies, and that he is *pouring contempt on ſome Princes*, while he is *crowning ours with glory and honour*. An ardour of Courage ſpread through the Armies of one ſide, while a diſpirited Feebleneſs runs

through

through the other, has been always looked on as the particular Work of Providence: From this we may give our ſelves juſt hopes that the next Year ſhall prove yet more proſperous, than even this has been. Happy Providences alone are no Arguments: but when they are ſignal and ſurpriſing on the ſide of a juſt and righteous Cauſe, we may more certainly rely on them, and may draw favourable Inferences from them, in our hopes of what is yet to come.

The long and great proſperity of the *Oppreſſor*, was one of the dark Riddles of Providence, which was, no doubt, a ſtumbling to many who ſaw it, but more to thoſe who ſuffered by it. God is now decyphering this to us. We do now ſee, that how well ſoever that formidable Greatneſs ſeemed to be eſtabliſhed, yet to ſpeak in the words of the next Pſalm, it was *ſet in ſlippery places*, ſo that all may now cry out, *How are they brought into Deſolation as in a moment, how are they utterly conſumed with Terrors?*

Pſ. lxxiii. 18, 19.

In God let us put our Truſt, and in him let us rejoice: *He has ſhewed Strength with his Arm, and has ſcattered the Proud in the Imagination of their Hearts.* He has often delivered us, and we may depend on it, he will ſtill deliver us, if we do not by our Inſenſibility and Ingratitude, by our Factions and Murmurings, as well as by our other Sins, defeat the deſigns of Providence, and render our ſelves unworthy, and indeed incapable of enjoying and improving theſe amazing Bleſſings, that are the Wonder of the whole World.

S. Luke i. 51.

This Nation ſeems to be the peculiar Care of Providence: What ſignal Bleſſings have followed us ever ſince the Reformation was firſt ſettled among us: What ſurpriſing Diſcoveries, as well as Deliverances, have happened ever ſince the laſt glorious Revolution? And what an aſtoniſhing Progreſs of Succeſs and Victory do we ſee in the preſent Reign?

What may not yet be expected from a QUEEN that offers up the Praiſe of all the Wonders of her Reign to that God under whoſe Protection ſhe humbly puts her ſelf, and whom ſhe ſo ſolemnly and conſtantly worſhips? Who ſeems to have no other reliſh of the Greatneſs of Power, but as it puts her in a Capacity of doing much Good Abroad as well as at Home. Her Reign has been hitherto one continued Flood of Proſperity, without any Ebb, or Mixture of Misfortunes. We ſee in it likewiſe a courſe of noble Projects, for the Good and the Happineſs of Her People, well begun, and ſteadily carried on. Her firſt Care was to reſcue her Clergy from Poverty, and its Conſequences, Ignorance and Contempt. With what Zeal has ſhe for ſome Years purſued the Deſigns of Uniting her Kingdoms into one Body, as well as all Her Subjects into one Mind? Oh when ſhall both be happily effected!

Late

Late Poſterity will feel the Effects of this; and will acknowledge that theſe great Bleſſings ſeem to be Felicities reſerved by Heaven to make Her Reign as much more glorious, than that even of the celebrated Queen of the laſt Age, as that was beyond any thing either in our own Hiſtory, or in any other whatſoever. May it but exceed it as much in its Length as it does ſurpaſs it in Glory!

What may we not expect, I ſay, from a QUEEN, who is the Delight and Admiration of all Her Subjects: under whom the Honour of the Nation is raiſed beyond all that ever went before Her? And who is ſo conſtantly, as well as cheerfully ſupplied, and now beyond the Example even of our beſt Times, by that GREAT BODY, who by their Zeal and Duty to Her, prove themſelves to be the true Repreſentatives of Her People: Who is alſo poſſeſſed of the profoundeſt Reſpect and Veneration from that ILLUSTRIOUS BODY, that receives the greateſt Communication of Honour from the CROWN. No Succeſſion of it, in any Age, paid a perfecter Return of Duty than they now do to the HEAD that carries it with ſo particular and ſo awful a Luſtre. The Harmony within theſe BODIES, and between them, is not only a hopeful Augury, but is the real Support and Strength of the Throne.

Under ſuch a Direction, and with ſuch an Aſſiſtance, what may not we look for from a General that has the happy Mixture of the greateſt Arts, or rather a Nature and Genius ſuperiour to all Art: by which he has procured to himſelf both an entire Credit with thoſe over whom he has no Authority, and the Univerſal Love of thoſe whom Her Majeſty has put under his Command. He leads them out to Victory, he exerciſes them in glorious Fatigues and Conqueſts, and when he has lodged them in ſafe Quarters, he comes over to us, and lets us ſee that all the New Acceſſions of Glory cannot alter that beautiful Modeſty that makes every thing elſe ſhine the brighter. And as he offered up the Praiſes of all his Succeſſes to God, in many repeated Solemnities of Devotion, ſo he ſeems ſcarce willing to take that ſhare of them to himſelf that is ſo juſtly due to Him.

Under ſuch a Head, with the noble Train of gallant Officers, and a brave well diſciplin'd Army, we may ſtill humbly hope for a Continuance of Victory and Succeſs. Nor have we leſs Reaſon to promiſe our ſelves every thing that is great, from our floating Caſtles, while they are under ſuch Conduct, and ſo well commanded. Eſpecially ſince the Nerves and Sinews of all are ſo well ſupplied, by a prudent Management, and an entire Credit at Home.

Our neareſt and ſureſt Allies, do bear their Share, how heavy ſoever, with ſo much Patience, in ſo cloſe a Conjunction with us, and ſo abſolute a Confidence in our General, that Practices,

which

which at other times have had a fatal Influence, are now visibly ineffectual.

These Princes that are united with us in the same Concerns of Religion, and are joined to the Crown in the greatest nearness both of Blood and Interest, have been hitherto so true to us and to themselves, that the present State of Affairs in those Parts, gives us cause rather to expect a new Accession of Strength from thence, than to apprehend any Diminution.

That Heroical Prince, who deserves so well his Rank among Crowned Heads, who has so eminently distinguished himself beyond all Example (to remember the Words of our Sovereign) who put all to hazard, and was very near being reduced to the same ill State, to which we see some of the Instruments of the *Great Oppressor* are brought. He, who with a *Noble Branch* of his own Royal House, has ventured and suffered so much, and now so gloriously recovered all. He, I say, who adhered so firmly to us in the last Extremities, cannot, in this happy reverse of his Affairs, be capable of forgetting the Hand that saved him, nor the Nation that furnished out the Army, with which he now Triumphs and Conquers.

These are the best Grounds on which any human Confidence can rest: Our Hopes are on a surer bottom; we trust in the *Living God who gives Victory to Kings. The* QUEEN *does rejoyce in thy Strength, O Lord,* and we trust she shall yet have Cause to *rejoice greatly in thy Salvation. Thou hast already made Her exceeding glad with thy Favour. She* still *trusteth in the Lord,* therefore we hope that *thro' the Mercy of the Most High she shall not be moved,* but that *Her Hand shall find out all her Enemies, that the Lord shall swallow them up in his Wrath, and that the Fire shall devour them.*

Ps. cxliv. 10. Psal. xxi. 1, 6, 7, 8, 9.

May we all learn from her Example to *Consider how great things God has done for us, that we may fear the Lord, and serve him in Truth with our whole Heart.* Let us again renew our solemn Vows in the humblest and sincerest manner, that when *God shall deliver us from our Enemies and the Hand of them that hate us,* we will *serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Life.* Let us conclude all as the *Psalm* ends, *Blessed be the Lord God, who only doth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious Name for ever, and let the whole Earth be filled with his Glory.* Amen *and* Amen.

1 Sam. xii. 24.

FINIS.